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The Neighborhood Developers selects NEI General Contracting for construction of 62-unit 25 Sixth St. project

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Chelsea, MA NEI General Contracting has started construction at 25 Sixth St. Selected by The Neighborhood Developers, Inc. (TND), a community development corporation (CDC) founded in 1978, NEI will transform a former light industrial site into a single mid-rise building with 62 new mixed-income rental and homeownership units, located on the MBTA's Silver Line near Bellingham Sq.

The Massachusetts' Legislature has committed \$115 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to scale up the Commonwealth Builder program, and 25 Sixth St. is the first homeownership project in Massachusetts to utilize ARPA funding.

The Commonwealth Builder program is a landmark initiative to address the racial homeownership gap in Massachusetts by creating new homeownership and wealth-building opportunities in communities of color. It is the largest state-level program of its kind in the nation. Massachusetts' governor Baker and MassHousing launched the Commonwealth Builder program in mid-2019, as a

\$60 million initiative to build roughly 500 new workforce homes affordable to first-time homebuyers in communities of color.

“The transformation of 25 Sixth St. in Chelsea is a showcase for the mission-oriented work of The Neighborhood Developers, and for our state’s leadership in deploying federal pandemic relief to create stronger and more equitable communities,” said MassHousing executive director Chrystal Kornegay. “This development will create quality new homeownership opportunities and affordable rental housing, in close proximity to transit and jobs, and provide a platform for economic prosperity.”

NEI was retained by TND for the demolition of an existing building and the construction of a new five-level residential building with 56 rental units and six ownership units plus covered parking for 40 vehicles. The new building will be constructed to meet Passive House standards. The Passive House Standard is composed of several strict performance requirements for new building construction. The resulting performance produces approximately a 90% reduction in heating and cooling energy usage and up to a 75% reduction in primary energy usage compared to homes built to conventional building codes. Passive House significantly reduces the carbon footprint while making a comfortable, healthy, and affordable environment. This is NEI’s eighth Passive House project in Massachusetts.

“We have a long-standing working relationship with NEI and knew they would be a great partner in bringing this project to life” said Steve Laferriere, director of real estate at The Neighborhood Developers. “The Commonwealth Builder program is hopefully going to fuel the development of more transit-oriented affordable homeownership opportunities to serve communities of color like Chelsea across the state.”

Of the 56 rental homes, eight of the new apartments will be subsidized with federal housing vouchers and restricted to households earning up to 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI), 36 apartments will be restricted to households earning up to 60% of AMI, and there will be 12 workforce housing units for households earning up to 90% of AMI. Three of the six townhomes will be sold to households earning up to <80% AMI, and three units at <100% AMI. There will be 27 one-bedroom rental apartments, 18 two-bedroom apartments, and 11 three-bedroom apartments. The building will feature a second-story roof deck courtyard.

Project team members include:

- General Contractor: NEI General Contracting
- Architect: Utile Architecture and Planning
- Property Manager: Winn Companies

- Civil Engineer: Fraser Poly Engineering Services
- Structural Engineer: RSE
- MEP/FP Engineer: Peterson
- Landscape Architect: Offshoots Inc.

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